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New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Musambachime (Zambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 163

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Draft resolution (A/59/L.32)

The Acting President: I give the floor to Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, to introduce draft resolution A/59/L.32.

Mr. Mammadyarov (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the General Assembly for supporting our initiative to address the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Assembly's support has reinforced the faith of Azerbaijan in the validity of the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter that governs this esteemed House.

In 1993, the United Nations considered the issue of occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and expressed its support for the efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group to settle the conflict in accordance with the norms and principles of international law. Since then more than a decade of the OSCE-led negotiation process has witnessed certain achievements and failures. Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), adopted in response to the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan, continue to remain the principal basis for settlement of the conflict with Armenia. The General Assembly, through its resolution 48/114 of 20 December 1993, entitled "Emergency international assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Azerbaijan", contributed to alleviation of the acute humanitarian emergency in our country.

The occupation of a significant part of our territories and a heavy humanitarian burden have obviously made Azerbaijan the party most interested in achieving the earliest and effective conclusion of peace. Azerbaijan's consistent adherence to the ceasefire over the last decade has demonstrated that the peaceful settlement of the conflict is our preferred way to ensure that nations of the region live in peace.

Four rounds of recent meetings of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan, convened in Prague with the assistance of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference, raised certain hopes. In the course of the meetings we managed to discuss the main issues of the hoped-for settlement, including the return to Azerbaijan of all occupied territories, thus enabling the displaced population to return to their homes in security and dignity, restoration of transport and other communications, establishment of normal inter-State relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and a gradual solution of the political issues related to the conflict.

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While the negotiations continued, we became concerned about credible information on the increasing transfer of settlers to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan from where 750,000 Azerbaijanis had been ethnically cleansed. Although we had reported on such facts in the past, there were only sporadic cases. Now these transfers have taken on a large-scale and organized character, administered through an official programme of the Republic of Armenia known as "Return to Karabakh". It is supervised by the Department for Migration and Refugees of the Government of Armenia and is financed primarily by Yerevan through a budget especially allocated for the separatist Nagorny Karabakh regime.

For this purpose the Armenian Government has engaged various organizations whose funds are being used for the establishment of new settlements in the occupied territories, which along with the Nagorny Karabakh region include adjacent Lachin, Kelbjar, Zangelan and Jabrail districts of Azerbaijan.

The most disturbing situation has emerged in the occupied Lachin district, which was populated by Azerbaijanis before the conflict. As a result of the implementation of the settlements programme, the region has about 13,000 Armenian inhabitants at present. Within the framework of that policy, the Armenian side applies fictitious Armenian names, instead of the original ones, to the Azerbaijani towns and villages in the occupied territories.

The Armenian diaspora organizations involved in the above-mentioned programme explicitly state that their main purpose is to facilitate the provision of an infrastructure to and colonization of Nagorny Karabakh by Armenian migrants. For the establishment of its settlements, the Armenian Government mobilizes its armed forces, deploying them in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Thus, those forces participated in the establishment of two new settlements in the occupied Kelbjar region.

There are also a number of official international sources confirming the transfer of settlers. For example, the 2003 United States Department of State's country report on Azerbaijan indicated that "Armenian immigrants from the Middle East and elsewhere had settled in parts of Nagorny Karabakh and possibly other Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenian forces". The Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, in his recent reports, specifically referred to that programme, which envisages a twofold increase of the Armenian population in the occupied territories.

Furthermore, Armenia also consolidates its occupation of the Azerbaijani territories through an economic and financial-monetary policy, with the banking system of the puppet regime established in the occupied territories regulated by the Central Bank of Armenia.

The 20 November 2004 issue of *The Economist* portrays Nagorny Karabakh as

> "less an independent entity than an extension of Armenia. The army is deeply integrated with Armenia's, the currency is the Armenian dram, cars have Armenian number plates".

As reported by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the Armenian authorities apply specific measures for encouraging hundreds of settlers from Iran, Lebanon, France and the United States. Settlers normally receive State support for renovation of houses of expelled Azerbaijanis or newly built homes, including reimbursement of moving expenses. They are exempt from taxes and pay very reduced rates for utilities. They receive 6,000 square metres of land per capita and credit for 20 years at a 0.5 per cent interest per family. Settlers of conscript age can delay their military service for two years.

Azerbaijan has already provided comprehensive information in this regard to the General Assembly in document A/59/568. I hope that the Assembly has had a chance to assess the far-reaching implications of the programme and settlements already established in the occupied territories. The programme envisages an increase of the Armenian population in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan of up to 300,000 people by the year 2010, whereas before the conflict the number of Armenians inhabiting the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan was barely 120,000.

This illegal settlement policy and the practices carried out by Armenia are in clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Such actions by Armenia impede the political settlement of the conflict, undermine the credibility of OSCE mediating efforts and are obviously aimed at prejudicing the outcome of those efforts and imposing a fait accompli on Azerbaijan.

The premeditated and purposeful nature of Armenia's actions — which in fact implement the 1989 and 1990 decisions of the Armenian parliament and Government on the annexation of the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan to Armenia — reveals the fraudulence of Armenian claims of non-involvement in the occupation of Azerbaijan's territories. There is undeniable evidence of Armenian attempts to integrate Nagorny Karabakh and other occupied regions of Azerbaijan into Armenia.

Although Armenia confirms — in words — the political will to settle the conflict peacefully, in reality, being inspired and guided by the aforementioned decisions, it continues to aggressively challenge Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and sovereignty, which is recognized by the entire world. In pursuing a policy of annexation with regard to Azerbaijan's territories, Armenia misrepresents itself as sincerely interested in the peace process.

If we analyse the entire chain of events, starting with Armenia's legislative and executive decisions that instigated the annexation, continuing with the actual occupation of Azerbaijan's territories and culminating in the transfer of settlers to those territories, we can logically conclude that Armenia, acting with impunity, is in the final stage of implementing its concealed goal, which is to realize its territorial claims regarding Azerbaijan.

Under the circumstances, Azerbaijan has appealed on numerous occasions to the OSCE Chairman-in-office, the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference and other relevant institutions. President Aliyev, in his address to the General Assembly earlier this year, devoted particular attention to the dangerous developments in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. From this very rostrum, he called upon Member States to take all necessary measures to ensure that Armenia puts an end to these activities. The situation continued to worsen and Azerbaijan, finally, was forced to request the General Assembly to include the item entitled "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" on its agenda.

Azerbaijan has presented the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.32, under agenda item 163. It is aimed at creating favourable conditions for continuing negotiations. In so doing, we do not intend to resolve the problems of the political settlement of the conflict within the framework of the United Nations. We are not attempting to engage the General Assembly in a consideration of conflict resolution issues. This matter concerns the current situation, which impedes the process of peace negotiations and, if continued, could lead to a humanitarian disaster.

The draft resolution submitted for the Assembly's consideration is balanced and constructive. It is based on the principles and norms of international humanitarian law and the relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions. The draft resolution gives the General Assembly's strong support to the mediating efforts of the OSCE. It contains concrete provisions that deal with the current situation, which is detrimental to the peaceful settlement of the conflict.

The negotiations are now at a critical juncture. Prompt and adequate measures are needed from all of us. The current consideration of the item and a timely reaction will play a crucial role. Armenia must take immediate, unconditional and effective measures to cease and reverse the transfer of settlers to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The Government of Armenia must give clear and firm guarantees that it will not continue such illegal policies and practices.

For our part, I continue to undertake all possible diplomatic measures to put an end to these dangerous developments in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. I have come here from Berlin, where I had a meeting, kindly organized by the Government of Germany, with the Armenian Foreign Minister. I am also in contact with the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference with a view to continuing the negotiations on the basis of the Prague meetings. We will try to explore all avenues and use all windows of opportunity before taking action on the draft resolution. The Assembly's continued attention and support in this matter are needed while consultations are underway. I will report to the Assembly on the progress achieved in this regard.

Mr. Cengizer (Turkey): Turkey has been unwavering in its support for a just and lasting solution to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict on the basis of the fundamental principles of international law, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the relevant Security Council resolutions and good neighbourly relations. In that regard, we have actively supported every initiative by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group aimed at achieving the noble goal of peace. We have also encouraged all the

concerned parties to reach a solution while facilitating the work of that Group, of which we have been a member since its inception.

The humanitarian aspect of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict requires the attention of the international community. However, to this day, this conflict also remains, unfortunately, a grave obstacle to the attainment of lasting peace, stability and regional cooperation in the southern Caucasus. At the same time, it prevents the larger region from enjoying the many benefits that would certainly result from a resolution of the conflict.

This Assembly is fully aware of why this particular debate is taking place here today. This is not an attempt to hamper or to replicate in any way the OSCE Minsk process, which is the platform from which to address this issue. On the contrary, this is a call to support that very process. The Assembly should recognize today's debate for what it is: a cry of frustration resulting from the years of despondency endured, on a daily basis and for over a decade, by those directly affected by this prolonged conflict. It is therefore time for the international community to recognize the dangers of prolonged human suffering and the perils inherent in allowing conflicts to fester.

We have witnessed too many problems that, in lingering on, eventually came back to haunt all of us. We have witnessed how people locked in protracted conflict situations and left solely to their own devices have failed — alas — to attain peace. It is with this understanding that we voice our support for the dispatch of a multinational OSCE fact-finding mission, which would report on all aspects of the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. We believe that this will have a constructive impact on the efforts of the Minsk Group.

It is in this vein that we would like to call on all the interested parties to engage more thoroughly in the Minsk process. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my country's readiness to lend, as a member, its full and active support to the Minsk Group, with a view to reaching a peaceful and viable solution.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): About a month ago the General Assembly began discussing concerns over the situation in the so-called occupied territories of Azerbaijan. This was done under the guise of urgency, using procedural loopholes, without any substantiation of the argument of urgency and without any factually correct information. The inclusion of a new agenda item did not receive the support of the overwhelming majority of General Assembly members and was also opposed by the Co-Chairman of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, the body that has been dealing with the conflict in and around Nagorny Karabakh for 12 years. The Co-Chairman stated that the current mood in the area did not meet the criteria of urgency and importance and the present initiative was counterproductive. Some countries, while supporting the Azerbaijani motion, expressed their sensitivities arising from the alleged transfer of settlers into occupied territories.

Armenia has clearly stated and would like to reiterate that neither is there an official settlement policy being carried out, nor does there exist any document or report of any kind verifying the allegations presented by Azerbaijan. Armenia strongly opposes these Azerbaijani initiatives, as the existing mechanism within the OSCE fully allows all concerns raised by Azerbaijan to be effectively addressed. My Government nonetheless decided, in a constructive manner and in order to put to rest all concerns addressed, to suggest facilitating the dispatch of a fact-finding team within the Minsk Group framework to assess the situation on the ground.

Let us see how Azerbaijan tries to address its own concerns. By presenting the draft resolution (A/59/L.32) as a balanced document that does not intend to interfere with the mechanisms of the OSCE Minsk Group, its authors attempt at the same time to give one-sided answers to almost all components of the negotiations package, namely the status of Nagorny Karabakh, the issues of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons, and the territories.

Azerbaijan tries to present its draft resolution from the perspective of human rights and humanitarian law. A country that itself violated those laws from 1980 to 1990 — during peacetime — by means of meticulously planned and systematically carried out massacres of Armenians in its capital, Baku, and in the cities of Sumgait and Ganca, tries to cloak its own actions by selective application of international humanitarian law. It limits the return of refugees to the area of conflict and to ethnic Azeris only, conveniently ignoring the rights of over 400,000 Armenians under the same laws, particularly those from the immediate Roman Catholic zone of Shahumian and from Getashen

and northern Martakert. Their homes have been confiscated and reoccupied by ethnic Azeris.

Despite its continued calls for the observance of humanitarian law, it is Azerbaijan that constantly hinders any kind of international humanitarian involvement or operation in Nagorny Karabakh, thus violating those laws and the relevant Security Council resolutions. It tries to mislead the Assembly and to justify its concerns on the basis of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, despite the cessation of military confrontation over 10 years ago. No other article of that Convention can be considered at this time with respect to the native Armenian population of Nagorny Karabakh and its authorities.

Azerbaijan makes unsubstantiated allegations regarding Nagorny Karabakh, claiming it to be a safe haven for all possible ills of the present world. Yet when the authorities of Nagorny Karabakh and Armenia invite international fact-finding teams to verify the nature of those allegations, Azerbaijan creates all kinds of obstacles to the dispatch of such missions. On the basis of fabricated concerns, Azerbaijan tries to formalize its totally groundless allegations through misrepresentation of the provisions of Security Council resolutions and the selective interpretation of the principles and norms of international law.

Azerbaijan avoids mentioning the universally recognized fundamental principle of international law — the inalienable right of people to self-determination — in its draft resolution, despite the fact that it is the core issue of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijan somehow conveniently forgets that the Security Council resolutions speak about local Armenian forces and call for unimpeded access for international relief efforts and the restoration of economic, transport and energy links to the region. None of those provisions of the four Security Council resolutions so frequently referred to by Azerbaijan have ever been implemented by it.

The continued blockade of Armenian Nagorny Karabakh is just one example. Azerbaijan also intentionally overlooks the fact that in the Council's resolutions, Armenia is specifically called on to use its influence to promote the peaceful resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict — which my country has been doing within the Minsk Group.

By its draft resolution, Azerbaijan tries to separate the issue of the so-called occupied territories from the whole package of negotiations. However, it fails to admit that those territories have come under the control of Nagorny Karabakh Armenians as a result of the war unleashed by Azerbaijan in an attempt to stifle the peaceful aspirations of the people of Nagorny Karabakh to self-determination. Today, those territories serve as a security belt around Nagorny Karabakh.

Given the military suppression efforts in recent years, as well as the war-mongering rhetoric of the current Azerbaijani leadership, the issue of those territories cannot be resolved unless there is a resolution on the status of Nagorny Karabakh and unless security guarantees are provided.

I would like to take this opportunity to state again that Nagorny Karabakh has never been part of independent Azerbaijan. The people of Nagorny Karabakh have proven their right to live freely and securely on their own territory, both legally — through the referendum conducted in 1991 in full conformity with existing Soviet legislation at the time — and morally, by defending that right in the war unleashed against them by Azerbaijan.

Peace should be achieved first and foremost between Nagorny Karabakh and Azerbaijan, which has rejected every single peace proposal made by the OSCE Minsk Group for the last six years. Azerbaijan is not interested in the peaceful resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. Its increasingly belligerent rhetoric inciting anti-Armenian hatred in Azerbaijan clearly testifies to the true intentions of its current leadership.

The Azerbaijani draft resolution aims at torpedoing the negotiations within the OSCE Minsk Group and diverting the international community's efforts into parallel processes. That would allow Azerbaijan to manoeuvre between those processes without committing itself to a final settlement of the conflict, using the United Nations and the General Assembly to accomplish that goal. Azerbaijan's initiative to undo the peace process should not be supported.

Ms. Moore (United States of America): I am speaking on behalf of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group — that is France, the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

The issue being raised today is one to which the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — notably through the Minsk Group — has long been responsibly and actively involved by helping to find a just and lasting solution. I would like to recall that during the past few months the Minsk Group has promoted what is known as the Prague process, which consists of meetings between the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia. The Prague process has already led to productive discussions between the parties.

Two months ago, the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Group proposed to the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan a framework for future negotiations, and they are waiting for comments by the parties. The OSCE, the Minsk Group and the Co-Chairmen can make progress only in an atmosphere of confidence between the parties. Anything in the direction of building confidence and avoiding a division in the General Assembly is helpful.

Azerbaijan is raising specific concerns linked to the situation in Nagorny Karabakh. We believe that those concerns can be fully addressed in the existing format. As a first step, an OSCE fact-finding mission could be considered as a means to address this issue. We urge the parties to take steps conducive to the political settlement of the conflict, including through continuing negotiations in cooperation with the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): On 29 October 2004, the General Assembly approved the inclusion of a new agenda item, "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan", on the agenda for its fifty-ninth session. Pakistan believes that the Assembly took the right decision, as any Member State has the right to request the consideration of an issue that it deems important.

In the case of Nagorny Karabakh, Pakistan fully backs a peaceful negotiated settlement of the conflict, based on the principles for which the United Nations stands, including the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all States, the principle of self-determination and respect for the relevant Security Council resolutions and for international humanitarian law. Pakistan therefore supports all efforts aimed at peacefully resolving this conflict. In that regard, we attach importance to the efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group, the European Union and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Pakistan continues to believe that the best path to peace in Nagorny Karabakh is through peaceful dialogue that is actively supported by the international community.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

I would like to inform members that, in view of the fact that consultations on draft resolution A/59/L.32 are still ongoing, action on the draft resolution is postponed to a later date to be announced.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 163.

Agenda items 45 and 55 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

(a) Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/59/224 and A/59/545)

(b) Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/59/282 and Corr.1 and A/59/545)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Achieving the Universal Primary Education Goal of the Millennium Declaration" (A/59/76 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)

Letter from the Permanent Representatives of Finland and the United Republic of Tanzania transmitting the report entitled "A fair globalization: creating opportunities for all" (A/59/98)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.30)

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): We thank the Secretary-General for his reports aimed at facilitating discussions on the interrelated subjects of follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits.

Four years ago, when the Millennium Declaration was adopted, there was an aura of optimism and hope in our collective endeavours to create a peaceful and just world. The euphoria created by the onset of globalization in the post-cold-war era had not yet subsided. The United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s in the economic, social and related fields had set out an elaborate normative framework to guide our collective action. World leaders affirmed their full faith in the shared values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility, embodied in the Millennium Declaration. Multilateralism appeared to be the paradigm of the future.

The common resolve to achieve shared goals and the values-based common purpose expressed in the Millennium Declaration were shaken by the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and subsequent events. The attention of the international community focused on the new and emerging threats to international peace and security. The existing threats of poverty, disease, injustice and underdevelopment received less attention. The common goals and values to which we had subscribed in the Millennium Declaration appeared to recede into the background.

However, the events of the recent past have changed the world yet again. It is now evident that collective and cooperative solutions can better address the existing as well as the emerging threats. The Millennium Declaration, with its comprehensive and balanced approach, remains not only valid but essential to rally the international community behind the vision of a world united by common values and shared goals, as reflected in the Millennium Declaration. In these testing times, it is imperative to reaffirm our faith in the need to strengthen multilateralism, with the United Nations playing a central role.

We are encouraged at some promising processes. The Millennium Project has raised awareness about the need to attain the Millennium Development Goals; the United Nations Development Group has continued its efforts to align operational activities with the Goals at the country level; efforts have continued to forge global partnerships, including through the Monterrey and Johannesburg processes; and the Economic and Social Council is gearing up to play a key role in integrated and coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits.

It is in that context that the Pakistan delegation welcomed the establishment of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. We look forward to its recommendations to help us re-establish genuine international dialogue and cooperation on how best to realize the vision set out by our leaders in the Millennium Declaration.

The Pakistan delegation believes that cooperative multilateralism, pursued mainly through the United Nations and based on Charter principles, remains our best hope for achieving the commitments made in the Millennium Declaration. We must promote peaceful, just and durable solutions to conflicts and disputes. We must also demonstrate the political will necessary to address the root causes of such conflicts and disputes — especially poverty and underdevelopment — as well as political and economic injustice within and among States. We must place human welfare and development at the centre of our collective endeavours. The 2005 major event will provide the most timely opportunity to recommit ourselves to multilateralism.

We believe that the centrepiece of the Millennium Declaration is the Millennium Development Goals, which have deepened the global partnership of the major institutions and organizations engaged in development work throughout the world.

The high-level event in the fall of 2005 should enable us to take stock of the progress made in the realization of the Goals. Unfortunately, the situation is not very hopeful. A large number of developing countries may not be able to achieve those Goals. Most of the developed countries also fall well short in the fulfilment of their commitments to help achieve the Goals, particularly with regard to providing official development assistance at the agreed level of 0.7 per cent of gross national product. We hope that the forthcoming report by Professor Sachs on the Millennium Project will identify concrete steps and measures to help achieve not only Goals 1 to 7 relating to poverty eradication, promoting health care and protecting the environment, but also Goal 8, which

calls for deepening international cooperation for development.

We have taken note of the Secretary-General's assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. We have also taken note of his observation that our preoccupation with the threats posed by terrorism and weapons of mass destruction has greatly overshadowed other issues, from HIV/AIDS to extreme poverty and environmental degradation — despite the impact that such issues have on the lives of hundreds of millions of people every day. We agree with him that it is essential to continue to make efforts to resolve our differences, because only a united international community can effectively realize the vision of the Millennium Declaration.

The 2005 Event will be an occasion to address the global development agenda in a holistic and comprehensive manner, including the inextricable linkages between development and peace and security. We hope that the event will be used only to advance common solutions to our common problems.

With regard to organizational aspects of the 2005 event, the Pakistan delegation believes that the preparatory process should be guided by three "Cs": caution, comprehensiveness and consensus. We should move with caution so that the process will not be led by the ambitions of a few rather than by the collective interests of the United Nations. We should pursue a comprehensive approach to evolve an integrated package of decisions, and we should take decisions by consensus in order to evolve a united Organization.

We noted in one statement yesterday the interpretation of caution as a camouflage for timidity and the call to be courageous. It is hoped that that call to be courageous will not be limited to one particular issue but will be applicable to other important issues, such as honouring commitments with regard to trade and finance, providing official development assistance at the agreed rate of 0.7 per cent of gross national product and removing subsidies on the products of developing countries.

It has also been argued that "comprehensive" does not necessarily mean "simultaneous". If that is accepted, issues will need to be prioritized in terms of their importance. Priority for early decisions would then be accorded to issues of fundamental importance to developing countries, which make up the larger United Nations membership. It was also stated that there was a danger that putting too much emphasis on consensus may in some instances stall improvements required for the United Nations. If consensus is not desirable in certain situations, then we will need to remain consistent in this approach and open to the possibility of voted decisions on a broader spectrum of issues of crucial importance to the majority of the United Nations membership. It would be unfair to be selective in choosing issues where consensus should not guide decision-making.

We agree with many of the ideas suggested by the Secretary-General in his report on the organizational aspects of the 2005 event (A/59/545) and endorse the comprehensive approach set out by him. We agree with his proposal to hold the summit from 14 to 16 September 2005. We also agree that the summit could follow the format and structure of the Millennium Summit, with plenary meetings and four interactive round tables. The theme of the round tables should cover the entire agenda of the summit so that an integrated review of all interrelated issues can be discussed by world leaders.

With regard to the preparatory process, we share the widely expressed view that the process should be open, inclusive and transparent and that it should produce a single integrated package of decisions. The President of the General Assembly should steer the process and could appoint facilitators on specific themes and issues as and when required.

In our view, it would not be sufficient for the summit to adopt a declaratory agenda. The outcome document must contain concrete decisions on issues of vital interest to the larger United Nations membership. The agenda of the summit meeting must therefore be comprehensive and balanced. In that regard, it will be important to take into account the wishes of the developing countries, which were expressed in the statement made yesterday by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, with which we associate ourselves. It will be essential for the event to focus on development issues and lead to an intergovernmentally agreed outcome that is all-encompassing, emphasizing the implementation of commitments of major United Nations conferences and summits and the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the eighth Goal.

We believe that the summit should focus on Goals 1 to 7; global partnership for development; peace and development, including issues of international peace and security, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, human rights, governance and the rule of law in international and national affairs; and strengthening the United Nations and multilateralism.

In terms of inputs to the process, we look forward to receiving the three main reports: the report of the High-level Panel on threats to peace and security; the report of Professor Jeffrey Sachs on the Millennium Development Goals; and the Secretary-General's comprehensive report, to be issued in March 2005. It is of crucial importance that the relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations also provide concise inputs to the preparatory process. The Economic and Social Council — which has the responsibility for integrated follow-up of United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, as well as its functional commissions, including the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission for Sustainable Development — should contribute concrete ideas and inputs to the 2005 event.

On issues of peace and security and related issues in the anticipated report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, it would be desirable for the General Assembly to hold open-ended consultations chaired by the President of the General Assembly.

We would like to conclude by sharing our optimism and confidence that the United Nations will come out of the 2005 event more united and strengthened, reaffirming and reinforcing our common resolve to translate into reality the vision of a just and peaceful world, as embodied in the Millennium Declaration.

Mrs. Laohaphan (Thailand): My delegation has the pleasure of addressing the Assembly on the agenda items before us today. Before making a national statement, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the detailed statement made by the Permanent Representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of Group of 77 and China, as well as with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The year 2005 will indeed be a critical juncture for us all. Not only will it mark the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, it will also be a year in which we will all have to look back and evaluate and reinforce our efforts and commitments in the realization of the objectives set forth in the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the timely organization of the high-level plenary meeting next year, which will provide an opportunity for all of us to consider the issues pertinent to the future of the United Nations as a whole. In other words, the high-level plenary meeting will allow us to look back upon our past actions, as well as to look forward to our future obligations.

In that regard, my delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/59/545, which provides us with a foundation for the modalities, format and organization of the high-level plenary meeting next year. While prepared to join the consensus on the organization of the meeting, my delegation wishes to stress the importance of the single integrated package of decisions, as suggested in the Secretary-General's report. That approach will allow all issues to be discussed together. My delegation believes that it is only through a holistic approach that we can review the Millennium Declaration properly. Therefore, my delegation looks forward to studying the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, as well as Professor Jeffrey Sachs' report, which will provide some useful recommendations on which comments will be made by the Secretary-General, and which will indeed serve as the basis for our discussions at the high-level meeting.

My delegation believes that the meeting should result in a declaration that is action-oriented, representing more than a mere promise, if it is to be fruitful.

My delegation is aware of the difficulties involved in the preparatory process for next year's event. My delegation, which wishes to be of assistance in the preparatory process for the high-level plenary meeting, assures Mr. Ping of its full support for and cooperation with him and his facilitators in order to ensure that the meeting is successful.

Regarding the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, my delegation is grateful for the report by the Secretary-General (A/59/282), which provides us with an updated account of such processes, addressing both "hard threats" and "soft threats", some of which

were not anticipated when the United Nations was first created.

Since the year 2000, when my delegation joined the international community in pledging its support for and commitment to the Millennium Declaration, my delegation has tried to keep its promise. On the development front, Thailand is pleased to report the fulfilment of its MDG commitments, which have resulted in the realization of most of the Goals. With our strong determination and persistent efforts, the internationally set targets for poverty, hunger, gender, HIV/AIDS and malaria, have been achieved more than six years ahead of schedule.

Thailand has also committed itself to fulfilling a set of more ambitious targets — the MDG Plus — that will exceed the internationally agreed-upon development goals. Worth mentioning in this context is the MDG Plus target of reducing the proportion of poor people to below 4 percent by 2009. The other MDG Plus targets to be pursued are in the areas of education, health, gender equality and the environment. My delegation is thankful to the Secretary-General for having recognized our efforts in this matter, as reflected in his report.

On peace and security, Thailand has undertaken many activities domestically, regionally and internationally. For example, Thailand has announced action against trafficking as one of our national agendas. On corruption, Thailand has already become a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. In the area of terrorism, Thailand has amended its relevant laws to enable it to accommodate its international obligations and has regularly submitted its reports to the Counter-Terrorism Committee set up by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

Turning to the issue of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, my delegation is of the opinion that the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits — such as those held in Monterrey, Johannesburg, Doha and the upcoming high-level dialogue on financing for development — are important to the realization of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. Despite the varying degrees of success achieved by those events, they all have a common goal, which is to promote the welfare of peoples.

Actions in the areas of finance, trade and the environment must go hand in hand in order for sustainable development to be achieved. In that regard, there should be strengthened coordination among those pillars of development. The institutions responsible for those particular issues should also try to improve their coordination, cooperation and coherence. Such efforts at improvement needs to be implemented at the domestic as well as at the international levels.

Next year, there will also be meetings that will enable us to review issues such as social development, the advancement of women, and HIV/AIDS. Thailand looks forward to actively participating in those meetings. It will also host the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in April 2005; we encourage States to participate.

To conclude, despite the efforts being made, much remains to be done in order fully to realize the Goals of the Millennium Declaration, which states that peace, security and development are part of the same package and must be considered concurrently.

The high-level meeting will allow us to reflect on our actions; to examine the relevance and responsiveness of the United Nations in order to address the changes of modern times; to reform existing institutions in order to enhance efficiency and coordination; and to prepare, if necessary, for future review. We strongly hope that the preparatory process will lead to an action-oriented outcome, to be adopted at the high-level plenary meeting.

Ms. Hall (United States of America): The United States looks forward to a broad review of the Millennium Declaration, including a discussion of the United Nations system itself, in 2005. The 2005 major event should be an opportunity to improve the agenda of the United Nations and make its activities more relevant.

We would welcome a focus on what Member States have done to implement the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. We would also welcome a discussion of what has been done to implement the internationally agreed development goals, including those set forth in the Millennium Declaration.

At the International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, world leaders recognized that the primary resources for development are to be found within developing countries: from domestic capital, from foreign investment and from trade. In that regard, the report of the Commission on the Private Sector and Development highlighted the critical role that the private sector plays in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty. Monterrey tells us how to achieve the internationally agreed development goals; for that reason, we have expressed a preference for including the high-level dialogue on financing for development as an intrinsic element of the major event.

Concerning the outcome, the United States preference would be to have a Chairman's statement in lieu of a negotiated outcome. We all have agreed that this meeting will not be about renegotiating commitments. It is an opportunity to assess progress.

We should use the 2005 event to see where countries, with the support of development partners, are achieving results by improving the rule of law, bringing increased transparency and accountability to local and national levels of government, improving the climate for growth and entrepreneurship, and investing wisely in their own people.

The 2005 event also presents an opportunity to improve the United Nations as an institution — to make it more effective through prioritization and judicious use of resources. We see an opportunity to make our intergovernmental deliberations more responsive to the pressing issues of our time, rather than bound to agendas of the past.

Finally, in 2005 we can reaffirm the importance of peace, democracy and respect for human rights as the bedrock for stability within and among nations and for widening prosperity around the globe. As we prepare for the 2005 event, we need to ask how the United Nations can have a more effective voice in advancing these very principles upon which this Organization was founded.

Mr. Toro Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is in full agreement with the statement made by Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the statement made by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Rio Group. Nonetheless, we would like to add some considerations on the important subject presented to the Assembly by the Secretary-General in his reports contained in documents A/59/282 and A/59/545.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its people welcome the initiative to convene a special meeting on the results of the Millennium Summit. We fully undertake to give our support in order to ensure that the event will help truly to strengthen the United Nations, making the Organization an effective instrument in the constant pursuit of justice, peace, dignity and life for all the world's inhabitants.

However, we recall that President Hugo Chávez Frías, in his statement at the Millennium Summit, noted that the previous decade had featured many summits attended by heads of State and Government, while most peoples groaned as they went from abyss to abyss.

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as we have informed the various committees of the General Assembly, has been developing and implementing a series of social and economic policies in fulfilment of the commitments made at the Millennium Summit. That effort has been carried through in spite of the numerous obstacles placed in the country's way by major interests, both national and foreign, including States and multinational corporations, whose actions range from an attempt to impose a dictatorship on us — against the tide of history — in order to steal our oil, to the latest act of terrorism, committed last week, taking the honourable and productive life of the Public Prosecutor, Danilo Anderson, who was responsible for investigating serious acts of subversion against the Republic and its institutions.

At the national level, the General Directorate of Short-term Planning of the Ministry of Planning and Development has over the past year been carrying out activities aimed at monitoring the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Social Cabinet created a team of officials drawn from all ministries to prepare a report on progress, accomplishments and challenges with respect to our commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The report has two parts. The first deals with the situation with respect to the targets, prepared by consultants under contract to the United Nations country programme for Venezuela, validated by a technical team consisting of officials from ministries with expertise in the area. So

far, the team has prepared 13 reports, on poverty, hunger, youth employment, basic education, gender issues, infant mortality, maternal mortality, AIDS, endemic diseases, environmental sustainability, water, medicine and new technologies. Another report, in the final stage of preparation, concerns political challenges.

Many participants in the Millennium Summit expressed their dissatisfaction with the action, and inaction, of the industrialized countries in meeting the needs of peoples in order to eliminate poverty and reduce the growing inequality between rich and poor countries, which constitutes the heaviest burden on most of the world's population, which is increasingly marginalized, destitute and condemned — in the best of cases — to mere survival.

We would like to reaffirm our President's position on this occasion. The event that we are planning for 2005 should provide a stage to spread the truth to peoples and tell them that the problems are not various terrorist activities or civil wars or conflict between States. The crucial problem is the collective and global nature of marginalization and poverty, which are destructive and must be countered day by day, in an increasingly acute situation. We have to close the wide gap separating promises from what is actually done, and we must abandon empty, two-faced rhetoric. Rather, we must demand justice, which can bring equality to the peoples of the world.

The United Nations has also been questioned with respect to its actions and inaction. The report of the Secretary-General (A/59/282) refers to the jump in the demand for United Nations peace operations. The situation is interpreted as a welcome signal of new opportunities for the international community to help bring conflicts to a peaceful solution. That situation requires a rigorous analysis on the part of the Organization. Although that observation is part of the truth, it is also true that we must also solve the problems at the root of conflicts, which includes the major interests linked to the manufacture of weapons, and that we need to impose sanctions on the companies manufacturing weapons, with the same rigor that unilateral and multilateral sanctions are imposed on peoples.

It seems that the United Nations is smothered and rendered useless in wars by not taking action against countries that interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, in violation of the United Nations Charter and international law, heedless of the opinion of the international community.

The Security Council is being used in resolutions that lack transparency, are based on flimsy arguments and often exceed the Council's functions by undertaking suspicious-looking interventions. The United Nations must speak with a single voice and a single will and expressly identify all those who violate international law. Dignity and life are just as important for the people in Darfur as they are for the people of Fallujah, in Iraq, or in Haiti. However, a different message is being sent. It is equally important to condemn abuses committed by Members States of the United Nations such as the abuse of prisoners in Guantanamo and Iraq. Financing terrorism is just as condemnable as funding non-governmental organizations to carry out activities, claimed to be in the name of democracy, against legitimately elected Governments, such as has happened in our country, in clear violation of national and international law. Claiming to act in the name of democracy while trying to depose and kidnap a legitimately elected president is just as reprehensible as wrongly using the instruments of the United Nations to legitimize a Government that has been imposed by force against the free will of its people.

Matters of peace and security must be dealt with in the framework of the right of peoples to self-determination, the rights of migrant workers and the rights of refugees. We must have clear criteria for strengthening peace all over the world and take up once and for all the most delicate case facing peace in the world: the Israeli-Palestinian problem.

We must consider the thorough transformation of the Security Council in conformity with principles including the elimination of the veto power, and not base reform on shady deals that ensure that, while everything appears to change, everything actually remains the same.

The sustainable development of peoples is inseparable from the financing of the Millennium Development Goals. International financial funding must be aimed unconditionally and massively at those who need it for development. The adoption of a genuine policy of debt forgiveness is the fundamental premise of change. Innovative sources of financing can help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The issue of development is a problem that concerns more than merely the national security of our peoples; it is the most explicit, substantive core issue of international peace and security.

Our country is of the opinion that nothing should be excluded in dealing with matters related to the Millennium Summit. Indeed, we must prevent the root causes of the problems from being submerged and forgotten in sterile discussions. The event that we await next year cannot become a forum where we try to convince developing countries of the benefits of globalization — as if it were an emergency first-aid kit — when it has only produced greater hunger and need and is not even a resource for survival in an unfair, unjust and discriminatory world. We cannot allow the outcome of our high-level meeting to become merely a charitable package for those excluded from the benefits of the wealth that, as we are well aware, is produced by all those who work.

Mr. Ramadan (Lebanon): At the outset, allow me to thank the Secretary-General for his reports under agenda items 45 and 55.

The delegation of Lebanon associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Our leaders pledged at the Millennium Summit to spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject, dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty and they committed themselves to making the right to development a reality. Four years after those pledges were made — and as the Secretary-General suggests — a major breakthrough is needed if the 2015 targets are to be met.

Lebanon, like other developing countries, strives to fulfil its commitments to reallocate and mobilize resources, to reform institutions and to adopt nationally owned economic and social policies that promote economic growth while strengthening democratic institutions and good governance. Those sincere efforts on behalf of developing countries will not suffice in the effort to achieve the development goals unless they are met by an equal commitment on the part of developed countries.

Commitments with regard to official development assistance must become concrete. Although we welcome the recent increase in the levels of such assistance, we believe that the time has come to move from an incremental approach of increasing official development assistance to a goal-based approach. Commitments regarding market access and a new development-oriented trade round, in addition to wider and deeper debt relief, are equally important.

Achieving development is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the State concerned, but it is the commitment to partnership — which shaped the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields — that created this paradigm of shared responsibility. In that context, dealing with threats that scourge all of humanity in an increasingly globalized world, such as threats to peace and security, poverty and hunger, is the collective responsibility of the international community.

The integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit should maintain the distinct identities of those summits and conferences, while pursuing thematic coherence.

In September 2005, we will meet here to take stock of how much we have all delivered and where we have failed to do so in implementing the Millennium Declaration and in following up the major United Nations conferences and summits in order to adopt the necessary measures and take the bold decisions — as the Secretary-General suggests — to realize our internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

An event of such enormous opportunities and with such a clear focus on development issues needs proper preparation to arrive at an outcome that is intergovernmentally negotiated in a process that is inclusive and transparent. Such an outcome should take into consideration the report that the Secretary-General will present in March 2005, in addition to the Millennium Project report and the outcome of the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in 2005. The outcome will also present a chance to reaffirm all the commitments made, all the agreements reached and the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

Peace and development are mutually reinforcing and interlinked, and the efforts to eradicate the poverty and hunger of the peoples of the developing world are

hampered by armed conflicts. The establishment of security and freedom from all kinds of conflict is conducive to development. We await in anticipation the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, aimed at opening up new possibilities for the strengthening of collective security, which is the building block of development.

The Acting President: I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Migliore (Holy See): My delegation would like to thank President Ping and the rest of the Bureau, not only for facilitating this follow-up of everyone's commitment to the internationally agreed goals of the Millennium Summit, but also for providing a venue where the much-needed political will to honour that commitment can be fostered.

Let me also salute those countries that have already submitted performance reports that reflect their national and global policies and programmes with regard to poverty reduction, thus attesting to their accountability and transparency. Those policies, geared to the target-bound and specific road map of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), provide reassurance that the 2015 objectives will not remain a mere wish list.

It is encouraging to hear from delegations about their commitment to development with a human face. Indeed, by forging links between human rights and development and by recognizing basic freedoms and equality before the law, we will eliminate many violent conflicts that threaten hopes for the realization of economic and social rights.

Progress in attaining the MDGs has been achieved in countries that have been able to establish significant economic growth processes, which have enabled them to pay by themselves the economic cost of the MDGs. That being said, scarce economic aid and current international economic conditions have not allowed the poorest countries to achieve the most important targets, in the areas of education, health and access to water and sanitation.

Last year, total official aid amounted to $68.5 billion, which constituted 0.25 per cent of the donor countries' aggregated national income, far from the long-agreed aid goal of 0.7 per cent of national income. In fact, much of the aid actually forthcoming is not targeted at the fundamental needs of the poorest countries. The ability of the poorest countries — which are found mostly in Africa — to obtain export and fiscal revenues is dwarfed by rich countries' export subsidies and by tariffs levied on African exports, which are sometimes 10 times higher than those levied on goods traded within countries members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Thus, the success of the global efforts towards peace and development — which Goal 8 emphasizes — is inevitably correlated to a precise vision of the role of the United Nations and to the ultimate responsibilities of Governments.

The United Nations accomplishes an important part of its mission when it provides advocacy and catalytic support to countries, enabling them to better implement the commitments they have made in international forums. At the same time, it seems evident that developed countries have a key role in empowering the poorest countries to reach the Millennium Development Goals. If this is to be achieved correctly, national leaders will have to reinterpret the idea of sovereignty with a view to a new global responsibility. Sovereignty will thus include the concept that developing countries must always fully participate in decisions taken regarding projects destined for their respective territories.

Moreover, enlightened leadership is expected from the United Nations. This will consist in building up strong collaboration, playing down unproductive rivalries and competitions between agencies and shifting the focus, instead, to shared goals.

Another important role of the United Nations is to help ensure that important new ideas see the light of day, instead of being sidelined. Strong leadership within the United Nations must also mean that steps are taken to make national and international governance more consistent. In other words good national governance must be backed up and supported by good international governance.

The Economic and Social Council high-level meetings with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization should continue to work towards an ever-greater coordination in favour of the poorest. The results of this cooperation must not be seen as an intellectual exercise but as a true and irreversible obligation.

When 171 Governments from the North and South signed on to the United Nations Millennium Declaration in the General Assembly in September 2000, there was a feeling of urgency in the air. The Holy See allied itself with these goals in terms of the jubilee challenge. The momentum was subsequently sustained worldwide by benchmarks, deadlines, campaigns, measured targets and pledges made in a series of subsequent conferences. Performance will be reviewed next year to examine how pledges towards the achievement of the goals are proceeding. Nevertheless, these summits will only promote the cause of peace if the commitments made during them are truly honoured.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/32 of 19 November 2002, I now call on the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Mr. Sergio Páez.

Mr. Páez (Inter-Parliamentary Union) (*spoke in Spanish*): The United Nations Millennium Declaration is a milestone in the development of the international system, and all parties, including parliaments, are committed to it. Signed by the heads of State and Government in 2000, the Declaration clearly calls, inter alia, for stronger cooperation with parliaments through the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). It was adopted just two days after the closure of the first World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, held in this Assembly Hall. At that event, parliaments committed to seeking a greater role in international negotiations and undertook to work for a stronger international system, with the United Nations at its core.

Since then, parliaments have made great strides in gradually achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Specifically, the IPU recently assessed the scope and nature of this participation through broad consultations with representatives of global public opinion.

We wish to highlight that most parliaments — in developed and developing countries alike — have interesting and unique experiences to share with the United Nations and the international community regarding the achievement of our common goals. As President of the IPU, I believe that parliaments and parliamentarians have a crucial role in the pursuit of these goals. They must focus their attention on these goals, educate their constituents on their relevance, and work to build consensus among other parliaments on the vital importance of achieving these goals for the future of humanity.

The Millennium Development Goals now underpin much of the work carried out in parliaments. Many legislative bodies in developed countries have explicitly integrated them into their work and have adopted development strategies and policies that relate directly to them. Parliaments in developing countries have been involved to varying degrees in setting national development strategies. They have worked to achieve some of the goals, particularly those related to capacity-building in global public health, to the prevention of and fight against epidemics such as HIV/AIDS and SARS and to gender issues, which are, in general, prioritized in legislative agendas. However, there is room for progress in terms of an efficient and integrated interaction with the concerned international organizations. Such an interaction would constitute a more dynamic and coordinated method of work.

All the Millennium Development Goals are relevant to the IPU. In our ongoing consultations with parliaments, we are informed of the measures that they have taken to increase citizens' awareness of and involvement in achieving the MDGs, and the responses are rich in concrete examples. More systematic use is being made of outreach and information activities directed at constituents and of public hearings by committees in which social and labour leaders are consulted. Most importantly, legislation is being adopted to implement the relevant public policies.

The IPU is very involved in some of the vital issues, such as gender equity, the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict through dialogue and, particularly, the development of a global partnership for development.

Permit me to briefly mention a few crucial examples. In France, the parliamentary report on the 2005 budget refers extensively to the MDGs in citing its basis and proposals. The Swedish parliament, for its part, has adopted a comprehensive new global development policy that is in keeping with the MDGs in the fields of trade, agriculture, the environment, security and migration. Both the Japanese and Czech parliaments are playing active roles in the formulation and monitoring of their countries' international development assistance.

Such examples are not only found in countries with solid and consolidated economies. In South Africa, Indonesia, Mali, Bhutan, the Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka, the oversight of national development policies and monitoring of external aid from multilateral bodies are a basic parliamentary function.

Lastly, international trade negotiations are perhaps in a class of their own, as they receive almost universal attention from parliaments. Many representative institutions are making special efforts to monitor and influence the implementation of free trade treaties. This is a specific area in which the IPU has over the past six years carried out a concerted follow-up programme on negotiations within the World Trade Organization (WTO). This has been of significant use to national parliaments, since it has provided an opportunity to develop the specialization and expertise of a considerable number of legislators.

Legislators are basically politicians; as such, they are people of action. That is why, rather than to make fine speeches and merely express goodwill, we wanted to inform the General Assembly about the concrete actions that have been taken and the real progress that has been made. We must increase our efforts and work with greater urgency to honour our commitments, as it seems that we are still lagging behind in that respect. At the Millennium Summit, the speakers of parliaments committed themselves to working together with the United Nations to create a stronger international system. The Inter-Parliamentary Union will hold its Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, here at Headquarters, a couple of days before the high-level summit in September 2005.

The Conference will study the progress made by parliaments and the expectations of both organizations in the context of their joint efforts to achieve a comprehensive vision of the state of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. That will enable us to assess, in a more comprehensive manner, the growing role played by parliaments at the international level and in our joint work with the United Nations.

Today, in this world forum, we reaffirm our strong commitment to concrete action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Goals are indivisibly linked to stable and lasting global peace, which is the strategic priority of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and its member parliaments. To that end, we will continue to work tirelessly to achieve those goals, which are so closely bound to humanism and solidarity.

The Acting President: In accordance with resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Gospodinov (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): We consider this debate to be of particular importance. In some respects, it is a preview of the important debates that are to be held in the General Assembly in 2005. It can be seen as laying down guidelines and principles for members of the international community and Member States. It is especially relevant to Member States that are dedicated to the provision of humanitarian and development assistance. However, it serves as a reminder to all States of their accountability to their citizens for ways in which economic and social development is managed.

That is true for both developed and developing countries. We believe that it is a mistake to see the Millennium Declaration as relevant exclusively to the needs of developing countries. The vulnerabilities it addresses are experienced in all countries, without exception, although very often in different ways. That point has been included in many important statements made recently by the Secretary-General and his colleagues, including in his remarks at the Fair Globalization event on 20 September 2004 and on the same day at the world leaders' meeting on Action against Hunger and Poverty, sponsored by the President of Brazil. That point is also an important factor in the main document being considered under this item.

We were therefore pleased to see so much of the document devoted to an analysis of the Millennium Development Goals. However, we were disappointed to see that the thrust of the document dealt with what the focus of Governments and international organizations should be. There is little recognition of the synchronized contributions that need to be made by communities and civil society. For example, there is no reference to partnerships beyond Government in the paragraphs relating to Goal 6, on combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Nor are references made to issues such as the stigma and discrimination often accompanying HIV/AIDS.

We hope that future discussions on the Millennium Declaration will allow for more debate. Hopefully, the debate will centre around the significant contribution that will have to be sought and obtained from civil society, volunteers and communities as a whole. This is necessary if the Millennium

Development Goals are to be achieved. We also hope that future examinations of the Millennium Declaration will, rather than viewing it only in a development assistance context, see it as being relevant to all vulnerabilities.

For that reason, we were disappointed to see that the section of the document that addresses the need to provide protection to the vulnerable is so heavily weighted towards vulnerabilities caused by emergencies. There is no doubt that emergencies significantly increase vulnerability. But it is no less true that vulnerability also exists in other situations and in developed countries, too. This can often result in what might be termed "forgotten vulnerability". One of the points that we will be making in other debates concerns the need for Governments and international organizations such as ours to address all forms of vulnerability.

Our member national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have as their fundamental priority the mobilization of the power of humanity to protect the vulnerable in all countries, starting, of course, with their own. We see the tasks of Governments as being very similar in every country, which is why we emphasize the application of the Millennium Declaration everywhere. That is also why we stand so strongly behind the remarks of the Secretary-General to world leaders at the Action against Hunger and Poverty meeting. We clearly see that unless the Millennium Declaration is applied worldwide, there will be a grave danger that the global underclass, of which he spoke, will be a considerable challenge to peace, prosperity and stability of the world.

My delegation has addressed various aspects of this challenge in our discussions on other items during this session of the General Assembly. Our purpose under this particular item is to state the respect that the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has for the Millennium Declaration and our determination to work with the international community to help to realize the Goals. The Millennium Development Goals resonate within our Strategy 2010, which was adopted in 1999. Our programmes reflect that resonance, and we look forward to working with the Secretary-General, his teams and other partners in the specialized agencies to help realize the Goals. That is precisely the focus of our 2005 appeal, which was launched this morning in Geneva.

We look forward to exchanging experiences with others who are dedicated to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We believe that our experience, and the work done by our worldwide base — which includes 97 million Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and members — towards similar objectives gives us special insight into the vulnerabilities addressed in the Declaration. We are sharing the benefit of these experiences through our special relationship with other components of the United Nations family, and we will continue to do so.

We hope that Governments will also recognize the importance of similar relationships with their auxiliary partners — their national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Without such a relationship, and without the reach that our members can provide to the vulnerable, it will be difficult for anyone to report sizeable progress when the review starts.

We also invite all Governments to build, by taking practical measures, on the commitments that they made when they joined us in adopting the Agenda for Humanitarian Action at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva in December last year. One of those commitments, which is highly relevant to the objectives of the Millennium Declaration, involves building and sustaining the capacity of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. That task, accompanied by programmes that ensure good governance and accountability in all aspects of country management, will do a great deal to protect human dignity and support the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.30, entitled "Enhancing capacity-building in global public health", as orally revised. Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since the introduction of the draft, the following countries have become sponsors: Madagascar and Nicaragua.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.30 as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/59/L.30, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 59/27).

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 45 and 55.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.